WRITTEN REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL SEARCH OFFICE (SUPPLEMENTARY PAGE) Intern. File No. PCT/DE2004/000285

Re Point V

Reasoned statement regarding novelty, inventive activity and commercial applicability; documents and statements supporting this determination

1 The present Action makes reference to the following document:

D1: EP0936111A

2 The present invention does not satisfy the requirements of Article 33(1) PCT since the subject matter of Claim 1 is not novel within the meaning of Article 33(2) PCT.

2.1 Document D1 describes a method for monitoring the performance reliability of a control device of a safety device for the protection of vehicle occupants, comprising the steps:

a) A negative acceleration caused by an impact is recorded;

b) A value for the severity of the impact is derived from the recorded acceleration;

c) The value for the impact severity is compared to a predefined threshold value.

d) If the value for the impact severity exceeds the predefined threshold value, a function error signal will be output, which indicates that proper functioning can no longer be guaranteed for the control device.

2.2 The steps a) through c) are part of the normal trigger method in D1. When step d) is reached and the impact severity exceeds the threshold value, the safety device is triggered. The function error signal will then be output in D1 (cf. paragraph 72).

2.3 Thus, the subject matter of Claim is not novel.

2.4 D1 also discloses the diagnostic device as recited in Claim 7. Thus, the subject matter of Claim 7 is also not novel.

Field IV Wording of the Abstract

The present invention provides a method for monitoring the performance reliability of a control device (2) and/or at least one sensor (3-5) of a safety device (1) for the protection of vehicle occupants, including the steps that a negative acceleration or velocity, in particular caused by an impact, is recorded, a value for the impact severity is derived from the recorded acceleration or velocity, and the value for the impact severity is compared to a threshold value. If the value for the impact severity exceeds the predefined threshold value, a function error signal (8) will be output, which indicates that for the control device (2) and/or at least one sensor (3-5) a proper functioning is no longer guaranteed. The present invention also relates to a diagnostic device (6) for such a method.